



Bureau of Health
Division of Community Health
Maine Injury Prevention Program (MIPP)

1-800-698-3624

or

(207) 287-5356

Fax: (207) 287-3993

What Does the MIPP Offer?

> Education, information, and resource materials on a variety of youth injury prevention topics.

> Technical assistance to local programs and communities to address prevention of Maine's children and family injuries.

> Grants to community agencies to prevent injuries, suicide and violence.

> Training and education to increase the knowledge and skills of individuals and agencies working with children, families and caregivers to prevent injuries.

> Surveillance of injury morbidity and mortality to monitor the incidence of injuries among Maine's children and families.

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FACT SHEET

CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY

Is there a problem here in Maine?

- According to the Maine Department of Transportation, from 1995 to 1999 there were an average of 40,144 motor vehicle crashes involving 104,891 people per year in Maine. On average of 165 people die on Maine roads each year. Nine of these were children aged birth to age 14, while 42 involved youth ages 15 to 24. According to Maine Safe Kids Coalition and other local efforts based on surveys conducted at child safety seat clinics held statewide 90% to 95% of the seats checked are not being used correctly. This is consistent with national data.

Is there a law here in Maine?

- Maine has a Child Safety Seat Law requiring children **birth** to age **four** be "**properly**" secured in a child safety seat. Maine's Seat Belt Law requires all persons age **four** years and **older** to be "**properly**" secured in seat belts. According to American Academy of Pediatrics, it is recommended that children remain in booster seats until they can be secured safely in vehicle seat belts (approximately 4'9" and 80 pounds). According to the 1998 Maine Seat Belt Study, the seat belt usage rate for all ages is 59%. This is below the national average of 67%.
- Although Maine has a Child Safety Seat Belt Law, many child safety seats are used "**incorrectly**".

Who is at Greatest Risk?

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children ages 1-5 in the U.S. They're also the No. 1 cause of disabling conditions in children.
- Seventy percent (70%) of motor vehicle crashes occur within 25 miles of home at speed below 35 mph.
- Insurers (both public and private) pay \$175M annually in claims resulting from crashes in which children (0 to 4) are unrestrained in motor vehicles.
- Every dollar spent on child safety seats saves auto insurers \$2.30, private health insurers and the government \$1.10.
- Child safety seats are extremely effective when used **correctly**, reducing the risk of death by 71%, hospitalization by 67% and minor injuries by 50%.
- Lap and shoulder belts are 45% effective in reducing deaths and 50% effective in preventing moderate-to-critical injuries to passengers.

What can we do?

- For proper use of the child safety seat, read the child safety seat manufacturers instructions. For correct installation of the seat in the vehicle, read the vehicle owner's manual and labels on seat belts.
- The Bureau of Highway Safety and Department of Human Services support 60 Child Safety Seat Loan Programs, which offer low-cost conventional and special needs restraints to families who need them. For the name of a loan program nearest you, please call (207) 287-9968 or (800) 698-3624.
- The **safest** seat fits the child's age, weight, height, fits the vehicle, and will be used and installed **correctly every time**.
- Children 12 and under should ride buckled up in the back seat.
- Wear a seat belt "**properly**" every time on every ride.